

[Mr. Eli Rohner]

[???] DUP

Week No. [3?]

Item No. [4?]

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FORM A Circumstances of Interview

NAME OF WORKER [L. A. Rollins?] ADDRESS [1126 W 6 St?]

DATE [Jan. 1939?] SUBJECT [Folklore?]

1. Name and address of informant [Mr. Eli Rohner 807 N. Bolv Ave.?]
2. Date and time of interview Jan. 1939 in evening
3. Place of interview at his home
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant none
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you none

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6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

[Medium size cottage, built years ago but well kept up. Neat yard. House clean, modern and nicely & tastefully furnished?]

Form B Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER L. A. Rollins ADDRESS 1126 W 6 St.

DATE Jan. 1939 SUBJECT Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Mr. Eli Rohner 807 N. [Bolv. Ave?] Hastings, Neb.

1. Ancestry - English

2. Place and date of birth - [Sterling?], Ill., July 10, 1869

3. Family - wife, one son, one daughter

4. Place lived in, with dates - Sterling, Ill. to 1911 came to Hastings

5. Education, with dates - Attended country school near Sterling, Ill. several terms. Finished about 6 grades, he thought, as schools were not graded then as now.

6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates - Tinner, Plumber now retired

7. Special skills and interests - None

8. Community and religious activities - Methodist

9. Description of informant - A remarkably well preserved man, so active, alert. Would pass for 50 in any crowd. Short [sturdy?] built. Hair just graying (as he says)

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10. Other points gained in interview - Townsend Plan worker. Great reader. Follows horse raising, taking magazine on same.

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

NAME OF WORKER L. A. Rollins ADDRESS 1126 W. 6 St.

DATE Jan. 1939 SUBJECT Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Mr. Eli Rohner 807 Bolv. Ave Hastings, Neb.

I can remember candle days and how we made them using a box [?] inch wood siding and 1 inch ends. Men all wore boots and us & all the neighbors, got one of these boxes boots came in and kept it for years to mold candles. Box was about 10 inches wide, 14 inches high & 4 feet long. The interior [was?] fitted using the lid and a few other pieces, Tapering holes bored and the tallow poured in around boughten wicks. Then were lifted out by slides 12 at a time. The wicks were tied and looped to center of each hole. The candles were about 10 inches long.

Our first oil lamp, first two in our section. Had a low round base with handle. The neighbors all came to see it and what a sensation it was to read by this compared to candle light. You could not appreciate this unless you lived by both as I done.

In soap making for years, we done this once a year. We had a large barrel for grease saving. In a shed we had a leach for wood ashes. Was made of wood and of course only cold ashes put in it. It was shaved like this V - ashes [??] trough

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The leach or ash box was about 4 1/2 feet high, [6?] feet long, 4 feet wide at [top?]. Tapering down to small at bottom. Under this built a rough, built in the 2 foot high platform. The whole thing was built on a slight slant to let the lye run in a tub or some big container.

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Water was poured on the ashes and run thru to troughs into the tub. The grease [&?] lye cooked, was [put?] in boxes and it was real livery. In a day or two was cut in big bars. The lower part of each box or small barrel of soap would get much firmer or hard like. It would in time get quite hard. This soap was arranged in rows, side by side, none piled on top of each other. This put in the basement for future months, would shrink a little and get hard. That soap thus made really cleaned clothes good. Would now seem hard for hands and face but it done the job.

Talk about school days. There wasn't any graduating. I started at 7 and quit at 15.

We had student as old at [33?]. Plenty of whiskers [&?] long wide sideburns. All in one big room, two to a seat. Some came to school only at certain seasons. Some staid short, some longer periods. It first depended on the season, the weather and what had to be done at home.

And the professor we had, if I live to be a million, I'll never forget that devil. (Mr. Rohner? then got up to demonstrate) It was my 2nd day at school. I snickered at another kid who shot a well chewed piece of paper at another kid. I didn't know a thing about the rules or anything. The professor was behind me. He didn't see 3 what this kid done but my little snicker, Well, God knows he seen that.

I had long curly hair. Up he stepped. Yanked me out of the seat by the hair. Grabbed one foot and the way we went to the front wall about 15 feet away. Then that devil bumped my head against the wall 7 or 8 times. I can still see those colored stars. My head got sore and I had a stiff neck for a week. Kids today sure have got it soft.

It was readin', writin', and arithmetic and a hickory stick. I'll tell you how all that hickory stick stuff started and what it meant to us kids in those days. I've seen girls get hickory plenty too. We had a slate blackboard across the front wall. About 4 feet from the floor. Then hickory sticks. They were about the size of your little finger at the end and the size of

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a ball bat handle at the other end. Used these to point out how we got arithmetic answers, explain a map and professor to demonstrate and to punish the scholars.

Boy what lickings. The kids were tough, the girls too but the professors were tougher.

Remember once a kid was at the board, drawing a picture of an engine. Another kid threw a big paper wad at him but missed and it smacked against the wall. Professor heard but didn't see who threw it.

He grabbed the hickory stick and the kid he though was guilty and did he get it. Professor hit him every where so fast you couldn't follow the stick.

Another time a girl pulled some stunt and that devil went after her with those damned hickory sticks. He grabbed her hand and she got one hard rap you could hear a [?] across pal of her [?]. There was a hole in this stick and you should of seen the [?] boil it raised.